

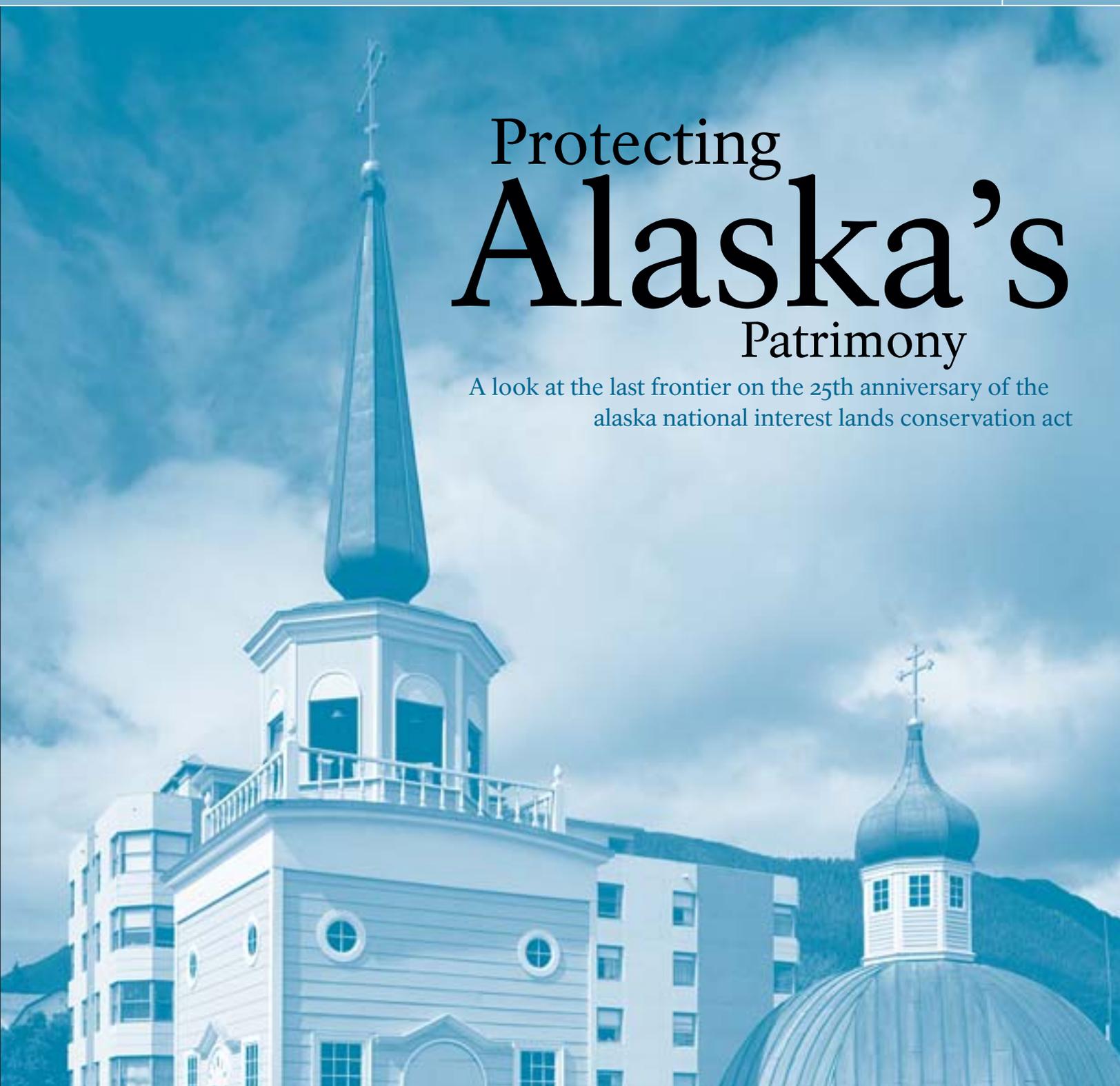
COMMON Ground

PRESERVING OUR NATION'S HERITAGE WINTER 2005



Protecting Alaska's Patrimony

A look at the last frontier on the 25th anniversary of the
alaska national interest lands conservation act



| BY MARCIA BLASZAK |

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE “LOWER 48,” those little contiguous states far to the south, Alaska’s cultural legacy may seem limited—perhaps some evidence of the great Klondike gold rush, and weren’t the Russians there a long time ago? That was close to my perception years ago as my Park Service career carried me along with stops at Shenandoah, Yellowstone, and parks in California. **SINCE MY ARRIVAL HERE 11 YEARS AGO,** my education has been ongoing, giving me a much fuller appreciation of the richness of resources, both those that find their home in the 17 park units and affiliated areas and those in the communities in which we live and work. **YES, THERE IS EVIDENCE** of the Klondike gold rush—some 15 restored turn-of-the-century buildings in Skagway from the heady days of 1898. Every day in the summer, the little town comes alive with a rush of cruise ship passengers and highway visitors—about 800,000 people a year pass through what is in the winter a town of less than 1,000. More quietly, a few thousand people hike the Chilkoot Trail, passing by the silent artifacts of the struggle made by thousands of seekers of gold and adventure as they lugged a ton of goods towards Canada and possible fortune. Rusting cans, moldering buildings, and bits of shoes tell volumes of a fascinating period of America’s history.

FURTHER TO THE SOUTH, in Sitka, there is indeed evidence of Russian America. Our park in the former colonial capital features the 163-year-old Russian Bishop’s House, the state’s finest remaining example of Russian architecture, painstakingly restored by the National Park Service nearly 20 years ago. And again, a quieter example of cultural preservation, a trail among historic totem poles winds its way to the area where the last major battle between Tlingit Indians and Russian colonists was fought in 1804. **ALASKA’S CULTURAL LEGACY,** though, stretches more widely and across a greater breadth of time than those well-visited examples. I’ve been privileged to see archeological sites in our northwest parks that go back more than 10,000 years, evidence of a hunting culture that—while technologically different than today’s—continues in our parks and preserves with the direct descendants of the earliest Alaskans. More recent examples of thriving communities, including others who came later, exist in every park. **THE ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT,** a quarter-century old in

2005, makes abundantly clear that our parks are not only great reserves of natural resources, but treasures of living culture as well. The opportunity for subsistence uses was, in the words of the law, essential for physical, economic, traditional, cultural, and social existence. It is wholly a part of the fabric of life in rural Alaska, and a fundamental purpose of most of the parks. **THAT CULTURE IS NOT ONLY REFLECTED IN** our subsistence management, but in other programs as well. The Beringian Heritage International Park Program has worked for the past 15 years to reinforce the links between Alaska and Russia, links that are as diverse as plant communities, language, and family relationships. **THE PURPOSES OF THE 10 PARKS THAT WERE ESTABLISHED** in 1980 variously include protecting archeological and paleontological sites, scientific research, the study of the peopling of Alaska from Asia, and providing for traditional activities. From those mandates, along with existing park and national legislation, Alaska has grown its preservation programs significantly over the past 25 years. But in many ways, we have just begun.

/// The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, a quarter-century old in 2005, makes abundantly clear that our parks are not only great reserves of natural resources, but treasures of living culture as well. ///

VAST AREAS OF PARKLAND REMAIN UNSURVEYED by archeologists. Professional care of growing collections remains a challenge for parks with limited budgets and curatorial space. Many nationally significant buildings have been restored, their decay arrested, but maintenance is a challenge. New places want to tell more of their part in America’s story: the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area provides timely lessons of another generation’s defense of the nation—and mistreatment of its own citizens; Barrow’s Inupiat Heritage Center tells the story of the 19th century whaling voyages, and their influence on the communities of Alaska. **DESPITE OR PERHAPS BECAUSE OF** these challenges, cultural stewardship in Alaska will be a continuing education not only for me and the National Park Service, but for the nation.

Marcia Blaszak is Alaska Regional Director for the National Park Service.



DAVID ANDREWS/NPS

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Cover: Sitka's Saint Michael's Cathedral, a Russian Orthodox masterpiece, was documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey. When the cathedral caught fire, a community bucket brigade saved the icons. HABS drawings guided the rebuilding, with the result shot by photographer Jet Lowe, shown here.

JET LOWE/NPS/HABS

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Protecting Alaska's Patrimony: A Look at the Last Frontier on the 25th Anniversary of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act

A roundtable discussion on balancing a complicated question of nature, culture, and history. **INTERVIEW BY JOHN QUINLEY**

PENNSYLVANIA ROCKSHELTER EARNS LANDMARK STATUS

In 1955, a man investigating a groundhog hole in southwest Pennsylvania came across what was to become one of the most important archeological sites in North America. The Meadowcroft Rockshelter, recently designated a national historic landmark by the Secretary of the Interior, has long been a lightning rod in the debate over the peopling of the continent.

The age of the site—and the vagaries of radiocarbon dating—is at the center of the argument. Located in the side of a steep, rocky slope that rises from a tributary of the Ohio River, the shelter is believed by some to have been occupied as early as 16,000 years ago.

Since the 1930s, the conventional theory has been that the oldest evidence of humans was at a site in Clovis, New Mexico, dated to about 11,200 years ago. It was believed that, with much of the world's water locked up in Ice Age glaciers, people made their way to the continent on foot via the Bering Strait.

THE SITE (AND A HANDFUL OF OTHERS LIKE IT) CAUSED A SCHISM IN AMERICAN ARCHEOLOGY. CRITICS CLAIMED THE RADIOCARBON SAMPLES WERE CONTAMINATED BY COAL PARTICULATE PERCOLATING DOWN THROUGH THE SOIL, SKEWING THE TESTS TO A MUCH OLDER DATE.

While some embrace the “Clovis first” theory, more recent discoveries suggest that Alaska was not the only point of entry, and that some may have arrived long before Clovis. Meadowcroft is probably the most sensational case for this rewriting of prehistory.

Archeologist James Adovasio of Mercyhurst College has been excavating the site since 1973. “At the beginning none of us thought it would be remarkably old or deep,” he says. His team went down to 16 feet, discovering a lengthy catalogue of activity. There were thousands of stone tools, over 300 fire pits, and almost a million animal remains. It is the largest collection of plant and animal remains at a single site in North America.

Archeologists discovered the earliest corn in the region, and some of the oldest evidence of squash and ceramics. The evidence stretched over thousands of years. Native Americans were likely still using the shelter as late as the Revolution, when it was abandoned.

It was at the lowest strata that the most surprising and controversial discoveries were made. Radiocarbon-dated material showed an age of 13,000 to 19,000 years. Stone tools and fragments from tool-making indicate humans were in the shelter at that time.

The site (and a handful of others like it) caused a schism in American archeology. Critics claimed the radio carbon samples were contaminated by coal particulate percolating down through the soil, skewing the tests to a much older date. Others contended that some of the alleged remains were of animals that weren't around in the Ice Age, when the first humans were thought to be hunkering down in the shelter. Since the mid-'70s, scholarly journals have been filled with articles on recognizing coal contaminants and the radiocarbon chronology from the Meadowcroft excavations. But four different labs found no evidence of coal contamination, Adovasio says, and a study “effectively terminated” the discussion, with the NHL nomination citing the care of the excavation.

There is agreement that the site is one of the oldest in the New World. With other discoveries there has been a shift away from Clovis-first. Findings at Virginia's Cactus Hill, Florida's Little Salt Spring, and South

Carolina's Topper site reportedly pre-date Clovis too.

Now, thanks to the landmark designation, the rockshelter enjoys the highest distinction bestowed on a place for its importance to the past. A \$250,000 grant from the National Park Service-administered Save America's Treasures program will fund a protective structure.

The site is owned by the nonprofit Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, which offers guided tours of the excavation, where tools and the remains of campfires from thousands of years ago can still be seen.

For more information, contact James Adovasio, (814) 824-2581, adovasio@mercyhurst.edu, or Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Museum of Rural Life, 401 Meadowcroft Road, Avella, PA 15312, (724) 587-3412, www.meadowcroftmuseum.org.

Right: The view from outside the shelter.



THE FUTURE AS RELIC

HOUSTON'S SPACE AGE ICON IN AN UNCERTAIN ORBIT

The Houston Astrodome sits in forlorn isolation these days. Baseball and football have moved on to new stadiums, leaving what was once the epitome of the modern sports arena to host the occasional rodeo or monster truck show. Yet, in its day, the Astrodome was history in the making. Completed in 1964, it was called the Eighth Wonder of the World, the first totally enclosed, air-conditioned stadium, the first to host football and baseball, and the first to attempt such a gravity-defying roof span—at 641 feet, 8 inches. Douglas Pegues Harvey, writing in *Texas Architect*, said, "Its location at the edge of the limitless prairie, in a nearly infinite parking lot, heightens the air of surrealism while its name appropriates the aura of outer space."

BELOW LEFT AND CENTER KATYA HORNER



WITH THE FATE OF THIS REMARKABLE FEAT OF ENGINEERING in flux, the Historic American Engineering Record worked with the American Society of Civil Engineers to document the site, photographed last summer by HAER lensman Jet Lowe.

Harris County, which owns the stadium, put out a request for proposals in 2003, looking for parties to renovate for a new use. The front-runner is the Astrodome Redevelopment Corporation, which recently obtained \$450 million in financing to turn the dome into a 1,200-room convention hotel with an indoor waterway similar to San Antonio's River Walk. The county has yet to approve the plan.

The fate of the place is a difficult subject for Houstonians. Many have a sentimental attachment; for some it is still a source of pride. Though 40 years old, it stands for Texas-size ambition and a sky's-

Above: Refugees from Hurricane Katrina take shelter in the dome. **Right:** The Texas-size drama of the stadium's interior space.

the-limit attitude. No politician wants to be known as the person who demolished the Astrodome.

FOR PURPOSES OF THE DOCUMENTATION, IT WAS THE STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING THAT GOT THE attention. The construction challenges were enormous. Much had never been done

THE AGE GAVE THE DOME ITS NAME. IN THE MID-'60S, THE SPACE PROGRAM WAS IN FULL SWING, WITH HOUSTON'S NEW NASA FACILITY AT ITS CENTER. THE FUTURE WAS THE RAGE; PEOPLE WERE TALKING ABOUT PUTTING A MAN ON THE MOON. HOFHEINZ DECIDED TO CALL IT THE ASTRODOME.

before, at least on such a scale. A New York company, hired to oversee the structural work, supervised a St. Louis structural design firm, which in turn brought in a specialist from London. As a 1965 issue of *Civil Engineering* put it, the arrangement was "a case of consultants who had consultants who had consultants."

The very things that made Houston an inhospitable place to watch a ballgame could wreak havoc on a structure like the dome. Designers had to account for strong winds and the thermal expansion and contraction of summer heat. A combination of stiffness and flexibility was achieved, in part, with steel columns free to move on pins at the top



ALL PHOTOS BY JET LOWENPSHAER EXCEPT AS NOTED



NEAR RIGHT AND CENTER FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME



Left, above right: The Astrodome inside and out. Above left: The first football game. Above center: Granger Hoyle breaks a tackle on December 7, 1968.



IT COST \$31.6 MILLION TO BUILD. THE PARKING LOT WAS THE WORLD'S LARGEST, HOLDING 30,000 CARS. MOTORS RECONFIGURED THE STANDS, ONE WAY FOR FOOTBALL, ANOTHER FOR BASEBALL. FANS SAT IN STYLE AND COMFORT, IN ORANGE AND RED CUSHIONED SEATS, WHILE WATCHING A \$2 MILLION ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD—THE FIRST OF ITS KIND—SIMULATE EXPLOSIONS AND CATTLE STAMPEDES.

and rollers at the bottom. A network of interconnected diamond-shaped trusses gave the roof both support and rigidity. Lightweight concrete was used for all the parts above ground.

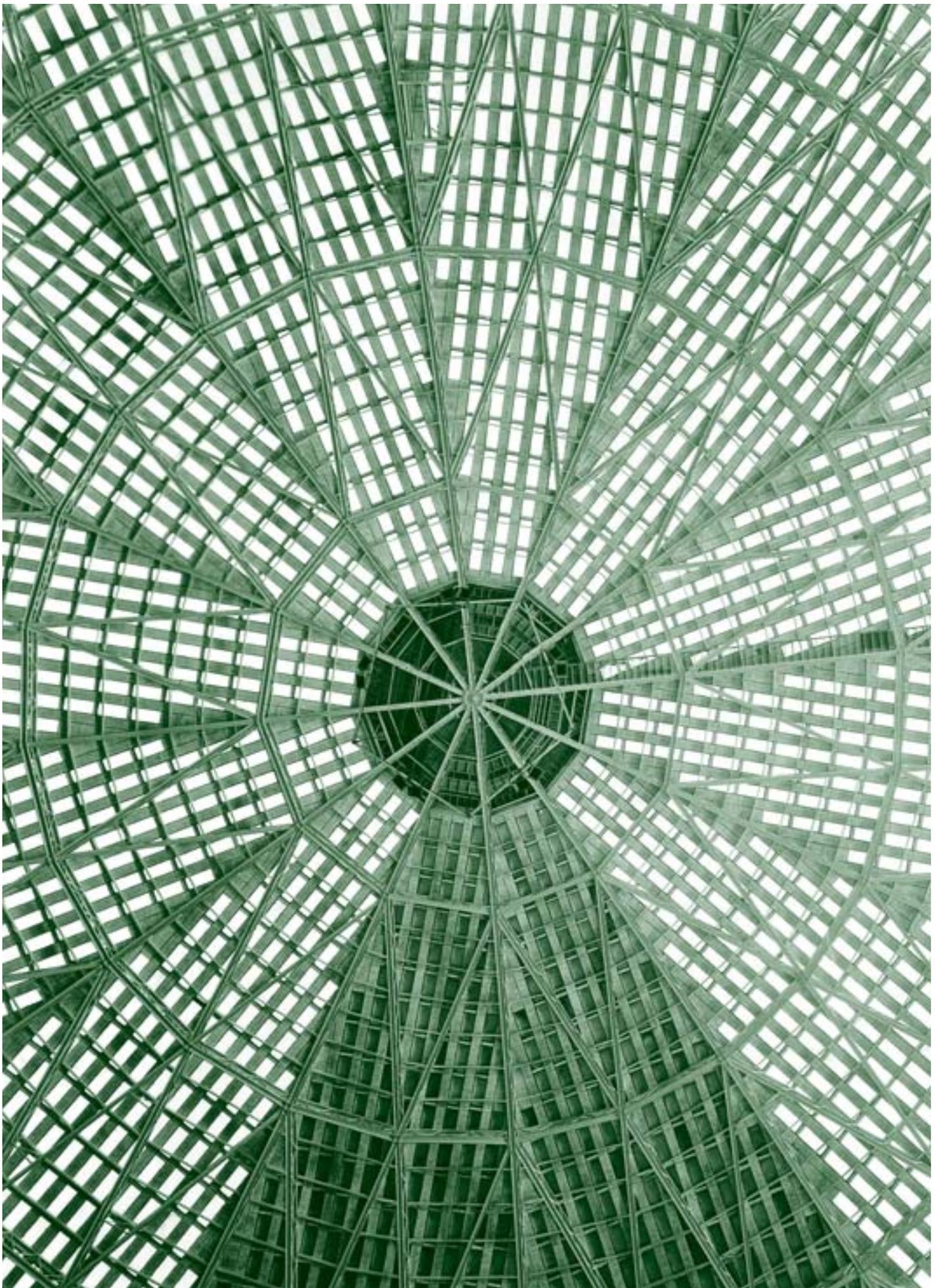
Merindra Gosain of Walter B. Moore and Associates, which did the structural engineering, says that designing without computer models was a feat in itself. “There was a lot of manual calculation,” he says. “To be able to predict very accurately what the deflection of the dome was going to be once the shoring and temporary supports were removed was [a major achievement].”

The field was 22 feet below ground, and ingenuity stepped in again with the shoring up of the concrete walls to hold the earth back. Steel cables—attached to the outside of the walls—connected to huge concrete anchors, or “deadmen,” buried some distance outside the stadium. A cathodic system protected against rust in the wet soil, a technique borrowed from the offshore oil industry.

THE ASTRODOME WAS THE IDEA OF LOCAL POLITICIAN AND ENTREPRENEUR ROY HOFHEINZ.

In the early 1960s, baseball was getting ready to expand, and he and his partners formed the Houston Sports Association to bring a team to the city. But the climate and mosquitoes made an open air stadium problematic. Hofheinz, who liked Buckminster Fuller’s geodesic domes, was reportedly inspired by a contraption the Romans unfurled over the Coliseum in inclement weather.

A public bond was necessary to build the place, proposed in 1961. Needing the vote of the county’s large African American population, Hofheinz enlisted the aid of Quentin R. Mease, an African American WWII vet and a respected member of the community. The bond got the vote on the condition that when the stadium opened, it would be integrated—just as the city’s lunch counters had been the year before.



NEAR RIGHT AND CENTER TOPPS

Opposite: Fly balls tended to disappear into the dome's pale background. Below left: Jim Wynn lofts one skyward. Below center: Baseball legend Joe Morgan broke in with Houston. Below right: Fans of the new stadium next door stroll past the old dome.

As construction proceeded, the dome got the attention of the engineering world. *Air Engineering* weighed in on cooling and heating 41 million cubic feet of space. *Welding Engineer* devoted a lengthy article to the truss-work. *Illuminating Engineering* enthused over the lighting system (“Natureproof Astrodome Gets Controlled Lighting”).

When work was done in 1964, people paid to take a tour; it was the nation’s third most-visited manmade attraction after Mount Rushmore and the Golden Gate Bridge.

The age gave the dome its name. In the mid-’60s, the space program was in full swing, with Houston’s new NASA facility at its center. The future was the rage; people were talking about putting a man on the moon.

Temperature at game time was always a pleasant 74 degrees. The opening pitch—or kickoff—was delivered under the light of 4,500 lucite panels, soon painted because fly balls tended to disappear against the pale background. A hearty variety of grass was chosen, but could not survive indoors, ushering in the era of Astro Turf, another Astrodome first.

THE STADIUM INSPIRED IMITATORS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY AS TRADITIONAL STADIUMS WERE abandoned in favor of the futuristic. Then came the backlash, with retro ballparks recalling the days of old. Suddenly, places like the Astrodome were considered “monument[s] to bad taste and synthetic sport,” as one critic put it. The Oilers left town in 1996. The Astros moved to a new park three years later.

When calls for adapting the stadium went out—to Disney, Six Flags, and Universal Studios, among others—Lee Hockstader wrote in the *Washington Post*, “The vastness of the Astrodome still impresses, but little else does. The plumbing is unreliable; the Astro Turf carpet is coming apart at the seams; the seats are rusting on their moorings. The air conditioning still works but only because it doesn’t need to most of the time.”



TEMPERATURE AT GAME TIME WAS ALWAYS A PLEASANT 74 DEGREES. THE OPENING PITCH—OR KICKOFF—WAS DELIVERED UNDER THE LIGHT OF 4,500 LUCITE PANELS, SOON PAINTED BECAUSE FLY BALLS TENDED TO DISAPPEAR AGAINST THE PALE BACKGROUND. A HEARTY VARIETY OF GRASS WAS CHOSEN, BUT COULD NOT SURVIVE INDOORS, USHERING IN THE ERA OF ASTRO TURF, ANOTHER ASTRODOME FIRST.

Hofheinz decided to call it the Astrodome. The National League Astros played their first season in 1965; the football Oilers debuted three years later.

It cost \$31.6 million to build. The parking lot was the world’s largest, holding 30,000 cars. Motors reconfigured the stands, one way for football, another for baseball. Fans sat in style and comfort, in orange and red cushioned seats, while watching a \$2 million electronic scoreboard—the first of its kind—simulate explosions and cattle stampedes. The well-to-do were ensconced in “skyboxes,” a harbinger of the economic changes that would transform professional sports.

Last summer, when thousands lost their homes to Hurricane Katrina, the dome was offered as shelter. But it remains a financial drain. To keep it open for a few annual events costs about \$1.5 million. Even shut down, it costs the county \$500,000 annually for upkeep.

Whatever becomes of the Astrodome, it is a chapter in the story of American innovation, one that was dubbed the “Can-Do Cathedral.” Writes Douglas Pegues Harvey, “To posterity, the most important test of a building is not in the continuing influence of its various innovations but in how it engages and alters the mythic landscape. By this standard, the Dome is a landmark of the first order.”

For more information, contact Richard O’Connor, Acting Chief, NPS Historic American Engineering Record, (202) 354-2186, richard_o’connor@nps.gov.

Grant Launches Restoration of Outer Banks Lighthouse

For 133 years, the Bodie Island Light Station has been a reassurance to mariners navigating the “graveyard of the Atlantic” off North Carolina’s Outer Banks. Standing since 1872, the lighthouse, located within Cape Hatteras National Seashore, still sends its powerful beam out to sea. But in recent years, the impressive, towering brick structure has begun to show the effects of time.

From its wrought iron staircase to the massive lens on top—a wonder of period technology—the lighthouse is wearing out. A grant from the National Park Service-administered Save America’s Treasures program is helping turn the tide of decay. The \$160,000 award, matched by the state, paid for full documentation of the site and a critical structural assessment.

The lighthouse, which spent many years under Coast Guard purview, was transferred to the National Park Service in 2000. “This is a new structure for us,” says Steve Harrison, the seashore’s cultural resource manager, who also served as project leader. “We really needed to get that documentation.”

The NPS Historic American Engineering Record provided large format photographs, measured drawings, and a historical report. HAER architects also brought a laser scanner with them, producing 3D renderings from all perspectives. “It measures every facet of each piece of stone,”

The station was part of a network to guide ships along the Outer Banks. In the 1850s, after an outcry over the poor lighting along the coast, Congress established a blue ribbon safety panel, which consulted sea captains. The powerful Fresnel lens was the preferred choice, though American lighthouses were slow to adopt them.

The grant provides a body of information to guide a restoration in 2008. In addition, it funded an assessment by structural engineers and lead paint removal from areas heavily visited by

THE STATION WAS PART OF A NETWORK TO GUIDE SHIPS ALONG THE OUTER BANKS. IN THE 1850S, AFTER AN OUTCRY OVER THE POOR LIGHTING ALONG THE COAST, CONGRESS ESTABLISHED A BLUE RIBBON SAFETY PANEL, WHICH CONSULTED SEA CAPTAINS. THE POWERFUL FRESNEL LENS WAS THE PREFERRED CHOICE, THOUGH AMERICAN LIGHTHOUSES WERE SLOW TO ADOPT THEM.



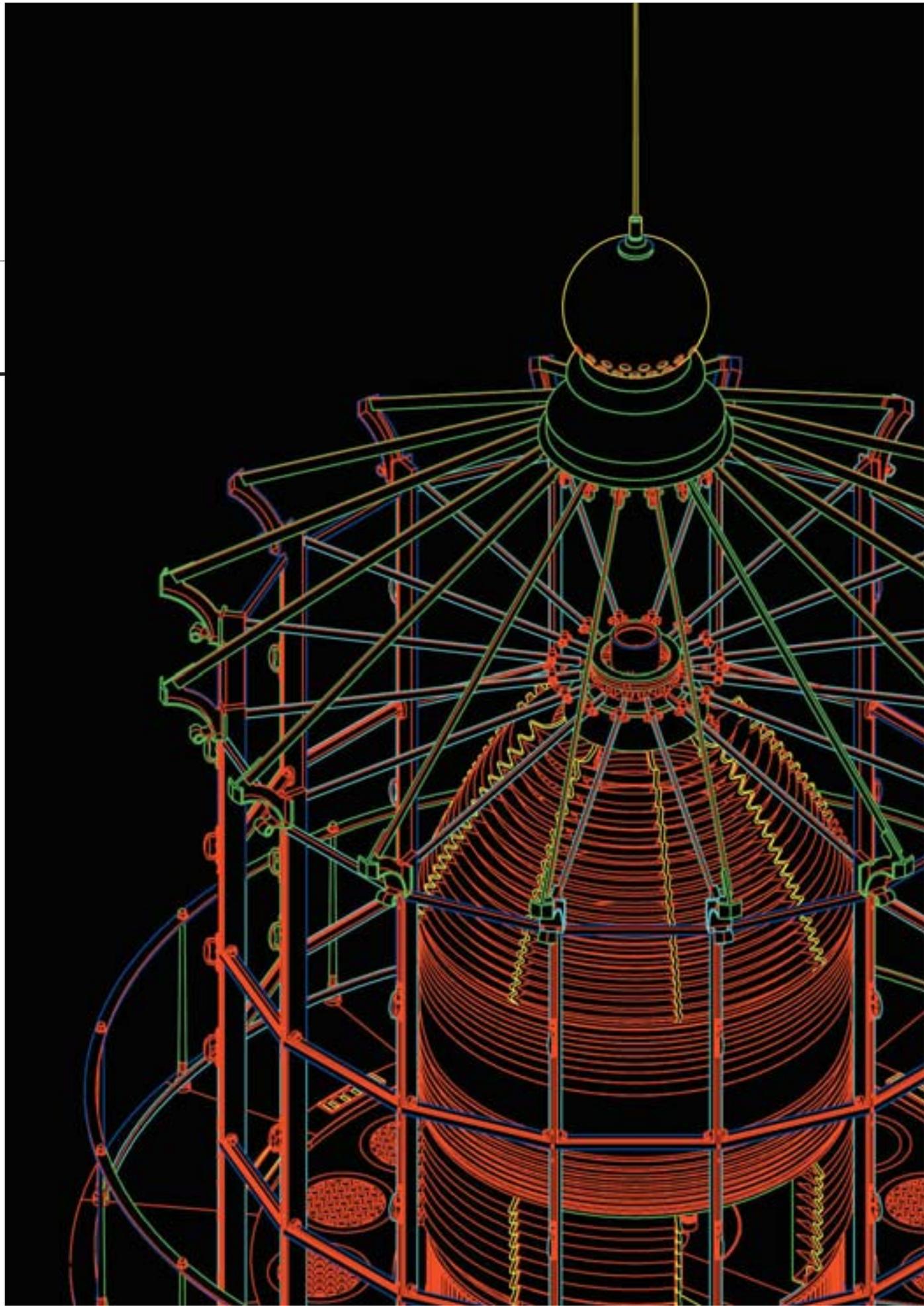
Facing page: With the 3D software, sections such as the lens can be turned about as though an object in the hand; in the ground around the keeper’s house, even slight undulations are visible. The technology could be indispensable for studying cultural landscapes, says team leader Todd Croteau. **Above right:** The Fresnel lens, named for the French physicist who designed it in the 1820s, was the first of the refracting type and the most powerful of the era, its beam visible 20 miles out. The metal is severely corroded.

says HAER’s Todd Croteau, who led the team. The technology, used primarily in civil engineering and industry, provides views that cannot be captured in drawings or photographs.

The lighthouse towers 150 feet over the surrounding marshlands. One of its two predecessors, eventually abandoned, began leaning only two years after construction. Confederates destroyed its replacement during the Civil War.

tourists. The HAER team prepared a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, which led to its listing.

For more information, contact Steve Harrison, (252) 473-2111, extension 159, steve_harrison@nps.gov or Todd Croteau, (202) 354-2167, todd_croteau@nps.gov.



the city that lit the world
by joe flanagan

REKINDLING A LEGACY AT N



NEW BEDFORD WHALING NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Restless, bored, and grieving the recent death of his father, the young man watched the shoreline drift slowly past from the deck of a departing ship. He was engaged in a rite of passage and a ritual of self-discovery that was probably not uncommon in that winter of 1841. Recalling the scene later, he would write, “On one side, [the town] rose in terraces of streets, their ice-covered trees all glittering in the clear, cold air. Huge hills and mountains of casks on casks were piled upon her wharves, and side by side, the world-wandering whale ships lay silent and safely moored . . .”

BELOW: NEW BEDFORD'S CITY HALL. ALL PHOTOS DAVID ANDREWS/NPS EXCEPT AS NOTED





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ERMAN MELVILLE WAS 21, A GREEN CREWMAN ON THE 359-ton *Acushnet*, bound for the Pacific in pursuit of the sea's most coveted prize. New Bedford, the town he describes in the immortal *Moby Dick*, was growing rich on whale oil, evident in its teeming waterfront, its grand houses, and its thriving financial institutions. Whaling money founded railroads, textile mills, and land corporations. It transformed New Bedford into an exotic, cosmopolitan city, its streets crowded with people from Cape Verde, the Azores, Portugal, and other distant ports. The New Bedford of Melville's time exuded the vitality of a place that had urgent business in the world, that had exceeded its humble beginnings. A hundred years later, New Bedford had the desperate and hollowed-out look of so many New England towns that hit their prime in the 19th century, then were left behind by advancing technology and economic change. The glory days of whaling were a distant memory. What was not visible, looking down on the decay from the elevated interstate that cuts through the city, was the struggle to preserve a heritage. It was a struggle fought locally, against sometimes high odds, in the face of indifference and the shadow of urban renewal.

LEFT: BOATS CROWD THE DOCKS OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS.

OPPOSITE, BELOW RIGHT: THE DOUBLE BANK BUILDING, ITS FACADE GRACED WITH TWO ENTRIES. BELOW CENTER: LOOKING DOWN COBBLESTONE STREETS. BELOW LEFT: CHIEF OF VISITOR SERVICES JENNIFER GONSALVES.

The establishment of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park in 1996 was recognition of the national importance of the whaling story and, in many ways, the crowning achievement of decades of hard work and faith. Comprised of 13 blocks of the historic waterfront, the park includes more than 70 structures, many of which are privately owned or managed by local authorities. It is a nontraditional model of a national park, whose viability depends on partnerships. In fact, the legislation that established it demands collaboration. Says Superintendent Celeste Bernardo, “We tend to look at partners as external to the park, but in this case they *are* the park.”

It is not a case of the National Park Service swooping in and rescuing history. Local organizations had been telling the whaling story for a long time. Advocates had been lobbying for preservation for years, and a nonprofit had quietly acquired scores of historic properties. New Bedford already had perhaps the most extensive whaling museum in the country. If anything, the park is a convergence of vision and experience, an arrangement where each party contributes its strengths to give voice to the city’s heritage.

Lighting the World

Whaling began as a serious enterprise on Nantucket in the 18th century. When Joseph Rotch, a wealthy whaling merchant, bought land near what is now New Bedford in 1765, he noted the depth of the harbor, an asset the island lacked. Whaling ships traveled far for their quarry. They were processing plants designed to strip the whale of its blubber and extract the precious oil by “trying out,” or heating the fat over fire. The oil was then stored in casks. For these reasons, whaling ships tended to be large, so when Rotch discovered New Bedford’s harbor, he began making plans to move his business there. Others followed, and in time, New Bedford was a boomtown, where every kind of business needed to keep the fleet afloat was in swing: bakers, oil refineries, caulkers, rope makers, carpenters, sail makers, riggers, shipwrights, marine insurance companies, and banks.

The most popular fuel of its day, whale oil was in demand around the world, and the city supplied a large share of it. It was used in everything from lamps to lighthouses, and it was also the finest mechanical lubricant available. By the end of the 1820s, whaling was almost exclusively an American industry, and New Bedford had surpassed Nantucket as the leader. The city’s population increased more than sevenfold between 1800 and 1830. By 1845 it had doubled yet again. In time, it would become known as “the city that lit the world.”

Exploring the blocks within the park boundaries, visitors experience the urban feel of the old whaling capital, imagining its noise, its frenetic pace. The cobblestone streets are lined with wood frame clapboard houses and red brick structures frequently interrupted by grander buildings that indicate power and perma-



Visitors experience the urban feel of the old whaling capital, imagining its noise, its frenetic pace. The cobblestone streets are lined with wood frame clapboard houses and red brick structures frequently interrupted by grander buildings that indicate power and permanence.

nence. But looking at the park’s wayside exhibits and other interpretive media, it is soon apparent that a lot more than whaling was going on here. The industry’s broader economic, social, and environmental impacts are among the themes explored by NPS and its partners via the park’s historic sites and educational programming.

In part because of ship contact with distant cultures and in part because of the influence of Quakers, New Bedford earned a repu-





LEFT: A MURAL IN DOWNTOWN.

tation as an open, tolerant city. Crews that signed on to whaling ships in the Azores, West Indies, and other places settled here and turned New Bedford into one of the most ethnically diverse cities of its day. Whaling captains who docked in the South often took on fugitive slaves, hiring them as part of the crew or bringing them back to New Bedford. Abolition got an early hold here. The city was a stop on the Underground Railroad and for three years Frederick Douglass made it his home.

Hunting and processing whales gave birth to highly specialized technologies. Whale oil and baleen—also known as whalebone—had an impact on everything from engineering to fashion. The oil was used in soap and candles; the stiff yet flexible bone was used for corset stays, carriages springs, hat brims, and buggy whips. As the whales dwindled, crews traveled greater distances in search of them, encountering foreign cultures that were often profoundly

Rescuing the Waterfront

Recounting the history of preservation in New Bedford, the national park's general management plan says that "by the mid-20th century, the waterfront district's decline was unmistakable." This period saw the first stirrings of a preservation effort at the community level. Jean Bennett, who, along with her husband Arthur, would become very much involved, recalls how a great deal of the historic fabric still remained. "It was never destroyed because we were too poor to build something new over it."

In the early '60s, with large parts of the historic city being demolished in the name of urban renewal, advocates formed the Waterfront Historic Area League, or WHALE, a nonprofit that acquires old buildings in order to save them. They are then sold under the condition that they will be preserved, with the proceeds going to a fund to acquire more buildings.

There were successes and losses. Government officials, devel-

In part because of ship contact with distant cultures and in part because of the influence of Quakers,



New Bedford earned a reputation as an open, tolerant city. Crews that signed on to whaling ships in the Azores, West Indies, and other places settled here and turned New Bedford into one of the most ethnically diverse cities of its day.

changed by the Yankee mariners and the practices, materials, and diseases they introduced. Voyages routinely lasted as long as four years, and separation from home and family gave rise to new social conventions both aboard ship and on shore.

A handful of sites conveys the breadth and richness of this story. The visitor center, an 1853 Greek Revival building, was originally a bank whose heyday was at the height of the whaling era. A short distance away is the New Bedford Whaling Museum, and the Seamen's Bethel, a chapel built in 1832 as a sanctuary from the taprooms and brothels. It is believed to be the inspiration for a scene in *Moby Dick* in which Father Mapple delivers his sermon on Jonah and the whale to a spellbound congregation that includes the novel's protagonist, Ishmael.

On the ridge above town is the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum, exemplifying the style and taste of the wealthy whaling merchants of the time. From there down to the waterfront are a host of other historic sites as well. Some are specifically mentioned in the legislation that created the park; all share the goal of preserving the whaling legacy and telling its story.

ABOVE: A FEW SCENES FROM NEW BEDFORD'S MANY FESTIVALS CELEBRATING LOCAL HERITAGE.

opers, and business owners were not always sympathetic. In the early '70s, the league managed to stop a four-lane highway from slicing through the

center of the historic district. Instead, it went through a traditional Cape Verdean neighborhood near the waterfront. "We lost a whole piece of the city," says Lisa Shugrue, the league's current director. "And we lost a piece of ourselves."

It was during that period that John Bullard, fresh out of MIT with a graduate degree in urban planning, approached the groups with the biggest stake in the waterfront district. Bullard had done his thesis on a theoretical revitalization of New Bedford, which he presented as a blueprint. The league, the museum, and the local merchants were all agreeable.

The preservation community also had a friend in Mayor John Markey, who was generous with federal community development funds available during the Nixon administration. This money funded a tremendous amount of work in the waterfront district, including burying power lines, replacing deteriorating blacktop with cobblestone, planting trees, and installing period street lamps.

ABOVE CENTER AND RIGHT NEW BEDFORD WHALING NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

BELOW, RIGHT: VIEWS FROM THE WORKING WATERFRONT.

But the idea took some selling. Bullard recalls how the mayor later confessed his initial skepticism: “Here’s a young guy with a beard coming in and saying that this most blighted section of the city ought to be fixed up.”

The area was designated a state historic district, which offered some protection. Boundaries were adopted that today delineate the national park.

An Urban National Park

The superintendent’s office was in the back of the ornate bank, later donated by WHALE. “We had two employees and a laptop,” says John Piltzecker, who, as first superintendent, guided the park through its early years. “The community had very high expectations. The Park Service just sent us there and said, ‘go do it.’”

Chief of Visitor Services Jennifer Gonsalves recalls that initial phase of getting acquainted: “I think some didn’t quite understand what the Park Service was doing here in New Bedford. There were folks that thought it would be an instant cash cow.” For others, it seemed too good to be true. After the failed attempt to earn designation as a state park—and a train link to Boston that never materialized—residents were skeptical. Says Gonsalves, “People said, ‘Gee, we missed the boat on everything. Now what’s this thing? We don’t even know what this means.’ It was perceived as the unattainable.” She spent many nights in church basements and community centers explaining what it meant to have a national park created in the city.

Coming into a place where other organizations had long been fighting the good fight had its delicate aspects. “The whaling museum predates the park by about 90 years,” Gonsalves says, “the Rotch-Jones-Duff House by 25 years, the New Bedford Port

In the old days it was said that the smell of whale oil was the smell of money.

Today, wealth rides the scent of diesel fuel and shellfish. The value of New Bedford’s catch is higher than that of any port in the United States.



ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT NEW BEDFORD WHALING NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

In the 1980s, the state’s distressed economy underwent a dramatic recovery when a proliferation of high tech companies set up business on Boston’s outskirts. They ushered in what came to be called the “Massachusetts Miracle.” Suddenly, there was more money for preservation. A new state initiative, Heritage State Parks, got started. It looked like New Bedford was going to become one when the miracle collapsed.

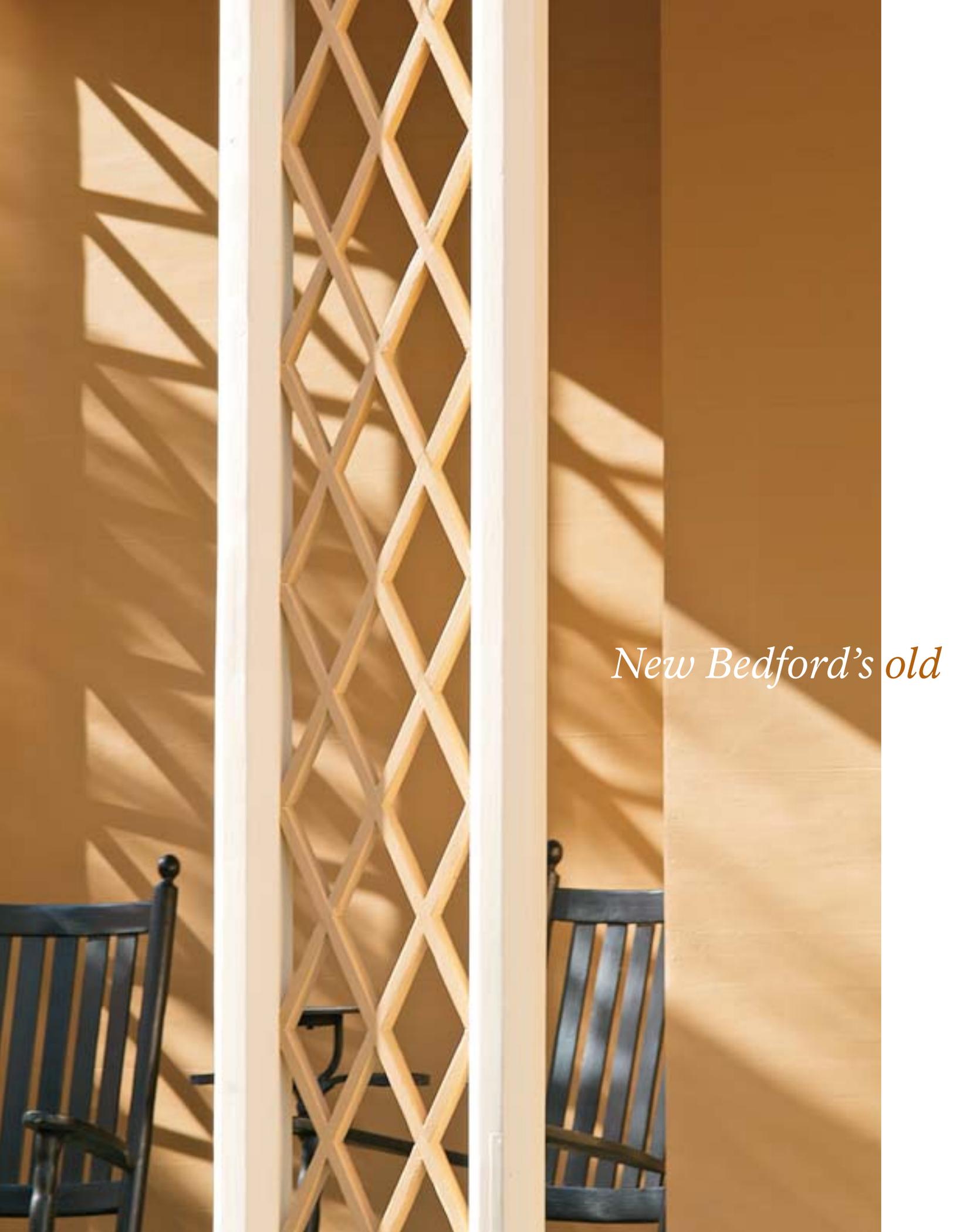
Supporters—who had prepared the documentation they needed to establish the area’s historic significance—decided to send representatives to Washington. They lobbied senators Ted Kennedy and John Kerry and Representative Barney Frank. But now the idea was inclusion in the National Park System.

New Bedford’s case was compelling. Enough so that the National Park Service agreed to a special resource study to evaluate if the place could become a park and, if so, how it would be interpreted and managed.

Society by 170 years. How do you come in and say, ‘You’ve done a real good job but we’ve got another way to look at this?’” But Gonsalves says the groups understood what was being brought to the table—“a connection to a wider network of special places.”

There were public meetings on the park, what kind of story it would tell, what the visitor experience would be like. The group Partners in the Park got started, an initiative that brings together cultural institutions, city agencies, and community organizations to share their ideas and help shape the interpretive approach. In addition to WHALE and the museum, partners include the privately run Rotch-Jones-Duff House, the schooner *Ernestina* (built in 1894, the oldest surviving vessel of its type and a national historic landmark), the New Bedford Historical Commission, and the New Bedford Historical Society, an organization devoted to researching the role people of color played in the city’s history. It has cosponsored (with the National Park Service) research on maritime connections to the Underground Railroad as well as an oral history project.





New Bedford's old

OPPOSITE, BELOW LEFT: SWEETNESS AND LIGHT IN AN HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD A SHORT STROLL FROM THE PARK.

A unique aspect of the park is its affiliation with a place thousands of miles away. The Inupiat Heritage Center of Barrow, Alaska, is also a partner, due to the intimate connection between the city's whaling crews and the native Inupiaq.

Whalers made more than 2,000 voyages to the western Arctic in the 19th century. Ice-bound crews stayed for long periods among the Inupiaq, and their presence had an enormous impact. Some of today's Inupiaq trace their lineage to them. Designated an "affiliated area," the center has a special status whereby the National Park Service contributes to its management and interpretation, recognizing Native Alaskans' role in whaling.

The park also sponsors training programs for teachers, has sent staff to the Azores and Alaska to work on exhibits, and maintains a dialogue with New Bedford's diverse ethnic groups.

Two chapters in New Bedford's story that had gotten little attention are addressed in walking tours and accompanying brochures: Herman Melville and the Underground Railroad. Today, visitors can see the places that figured prominently in American literature and civil rights. Each year, there is a 24-hour marathon reading of *Moby Dick* in the museum. Passages are read in Portuguese, Cape Verdean Creole, Inupiaq, and other languages associated with whaling. For the scene that includes Father Mapple's sermon, the reading moves to the pulpit at the Seamen's Bethel.

unloaded directly into refrigerated trucks and taken to restaurants and distributors up and down the eastern seaboard.

The discovery of petroleum in Pennsylvania in 1859 spelled the end of whale oil's usefulness and started the industry's long decline. By the end of the 19th century, whaling was, for all practical purposes, a thing of the past. The future was in textiles. The city industrialized, and factories went up, buildings whose vacant hulks are still there today. Textile manufacturing moved elsewhere in the 1920s. The fishing industry took its place as the economic engine that drives New Bedford today.

John Piltzecker recalls that when the park and its partners were soliciting ideas on how to tell the story, he found that the fishing community tended to feel left out. Says Jennifer Gonsalves, "It's seen as dirty, separated from the rest of the city by the highway."

This was addressed by the "working waterfront" part of the interpretive plan. Visitors follow a self-guided tour of the docks with a brochure that gives an inside look at a modern fishing industry, based primarily on shellfish, which is in great demand.

On the waterfront the old mixes with the new. The warehouses, icehouses, and vessels are side-by-side with reminders of the city's maritime history. Wayside exhibits show where immigrants took their first steps in America, where casks of whale oil piled high once covered the waterfront.

streets are a remarkable monument to an era, made more remarkable still by the process that made it possible to walk down them today and disappear fully into the past.



Touring the park, visitors encounter the elevated four-lane highway that emphatically announces that you are leaving the past and entering the current-day city. From a pedestrian walkway that goes over the highway, the riggings of dozens of boats come into view. Beyond is the grey, flat horizon of Buzzard's Bay and the way out to sea. This is the scene of yet another renaissance for New Bedford: its highly successful commercial fishing industry. In the old days it was said that the smell of whale oil was the smell of money. Today, wealth rides the scent of diesel fuel and shellfish. The value of New Bedford's catch is higher than that of any port in the United States. Scallops, flounder, cod, and haddock are

At the Wharfinger Building, where daily fish auctions used to be held, the city operates a visitor center. A permanent exhibit, produced in collaboration with the National Park Service, looks at the history and workings of New Bedford's fishing industry. And each year brings the Working Waterfront Festival, a three-day event that includes dance, food, music, tours, oral histories, and demonstrations.

ABOVE RIGHT: THE HISTORIC ROTCH-JONES-DUFF HOUSE, WHICH BORDERS DOWNTOWN, REFLECTS THE ARCHITECTURAL RICHNESS OF MANY NEARBY RESIDENCES.

ABOVE RIGHT NEW BEDFORD WHALING NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

A Course for the Future

As the park's tenth anniversary approaches, it looks to the future with optimism—and a plan to build on what's been done so far. Jennifer Gonsalves stands on the sidewalk outside the visitor center, pointing to a vacant three-story brick structure that dates back to 1877. The Corson building, which housed a succession of maritime-related businesses, is considered critical to the park's historic fabric. When it caught fire in 1997, it was given up as a total loss. The league acquired and donated it. Now the Park Service will spend \$6 million converting it into the park's education center.

Gonsalves, who grew up in New Bedford, offers some perspective. "I remember pre-park," she says. "And I can tell you that

chapters of *Moby Dick*? They happened here. Right here."

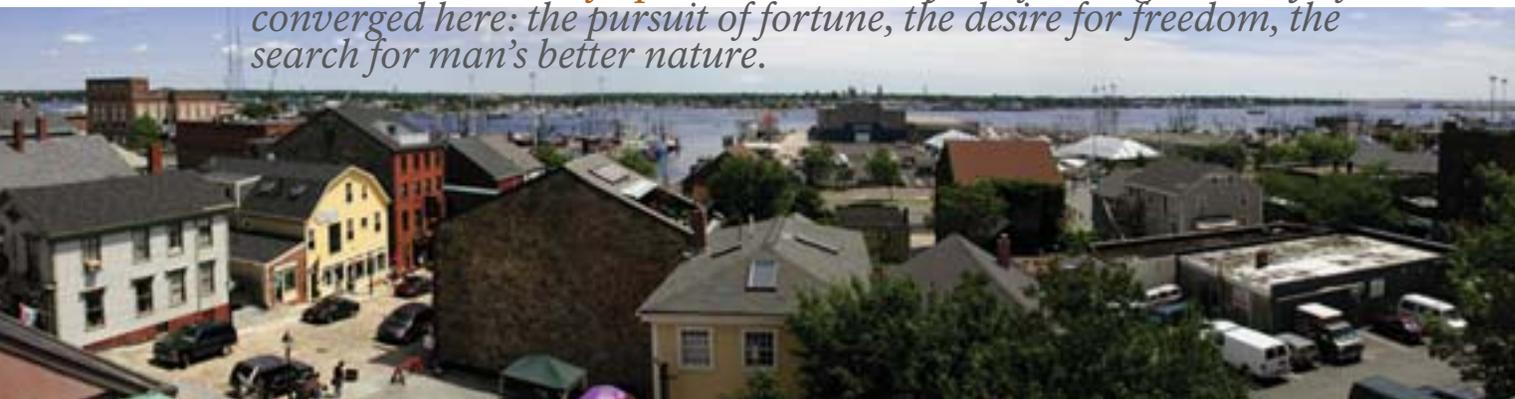
In the whaling museum's small auditorium, "The City That Lit the World," a short film produced by the Park Service, is shown several times a day, prefaced by a short presentation by a ranger. At its conclusion, visitors wander through the museum, exploring what now seems a distant culture, built entirely from the ocean and the giants that swam in it. From there they go out into the streets, which are themselves artifacts. It is often a new experience for visitors who have preconceived notions of what a national park is, who occasionally ask, "Where is the green?"

Even when it is out of sight, the sea can be sensed over the elevated highway, over the ancient rooftops. It is like history itself, telling the story of what converged here: the pursuit of fortune, the desire for freedom, the search for man's better nature.

Courage, altruism, and ingenuity. New Bedford's old streets are a remarkable monument to an era, made more remarkable still by the process that makes it possible to walk down them today and disappear fully into the past.

For more information, contact New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, 33 William Street, New Bedford, MA 02740, (508) 996-4095, or visit www.nps.gov/nebe.

Even when it is out of sight, the sea can be sensed over the elevated highway, over the ancient rooftops. It is like history itself, telling the story of what converged here: the pursuit of fortune, the desire for freedom, the search for man's better nature.

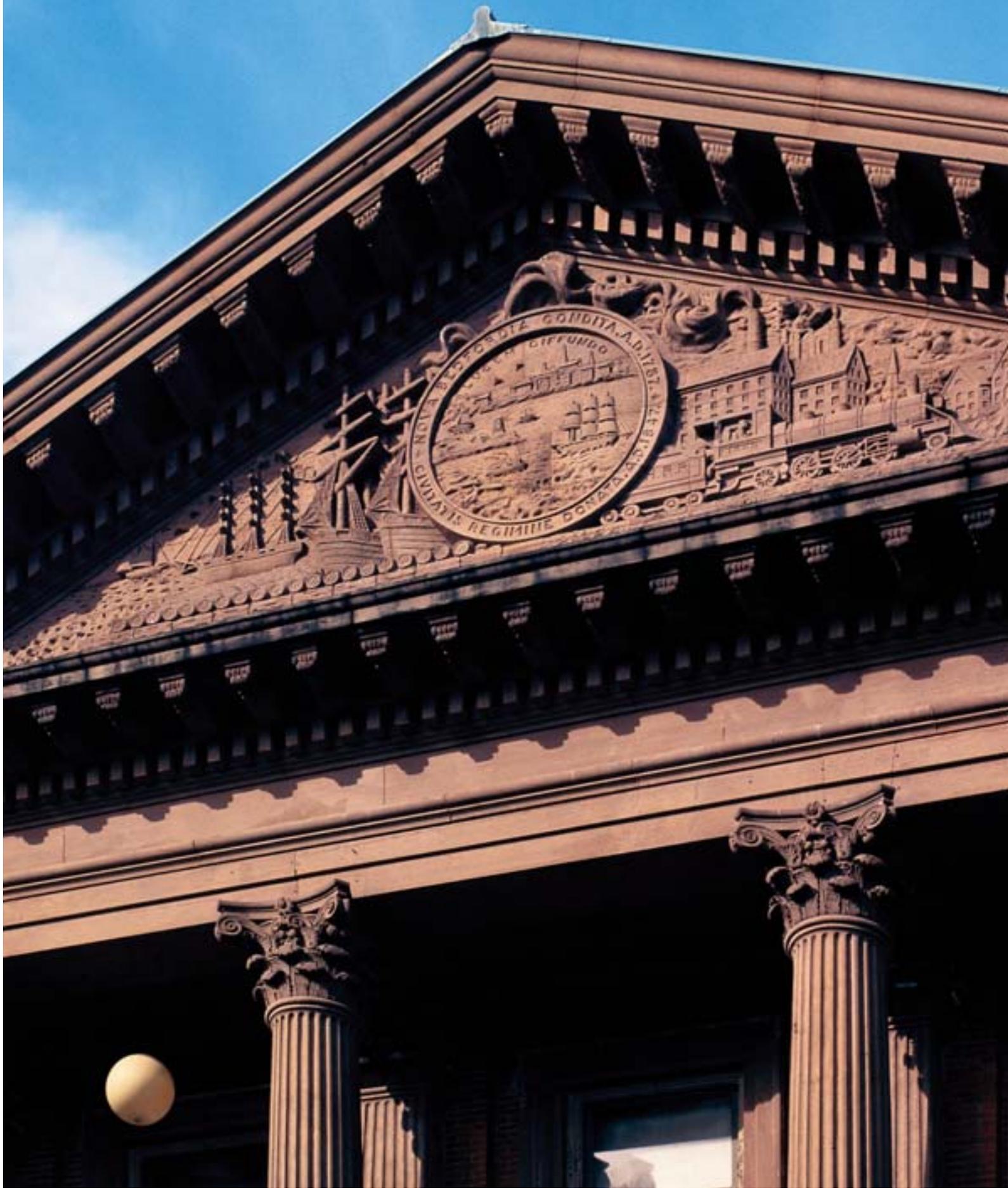


NEW BEDFORD WHALING NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

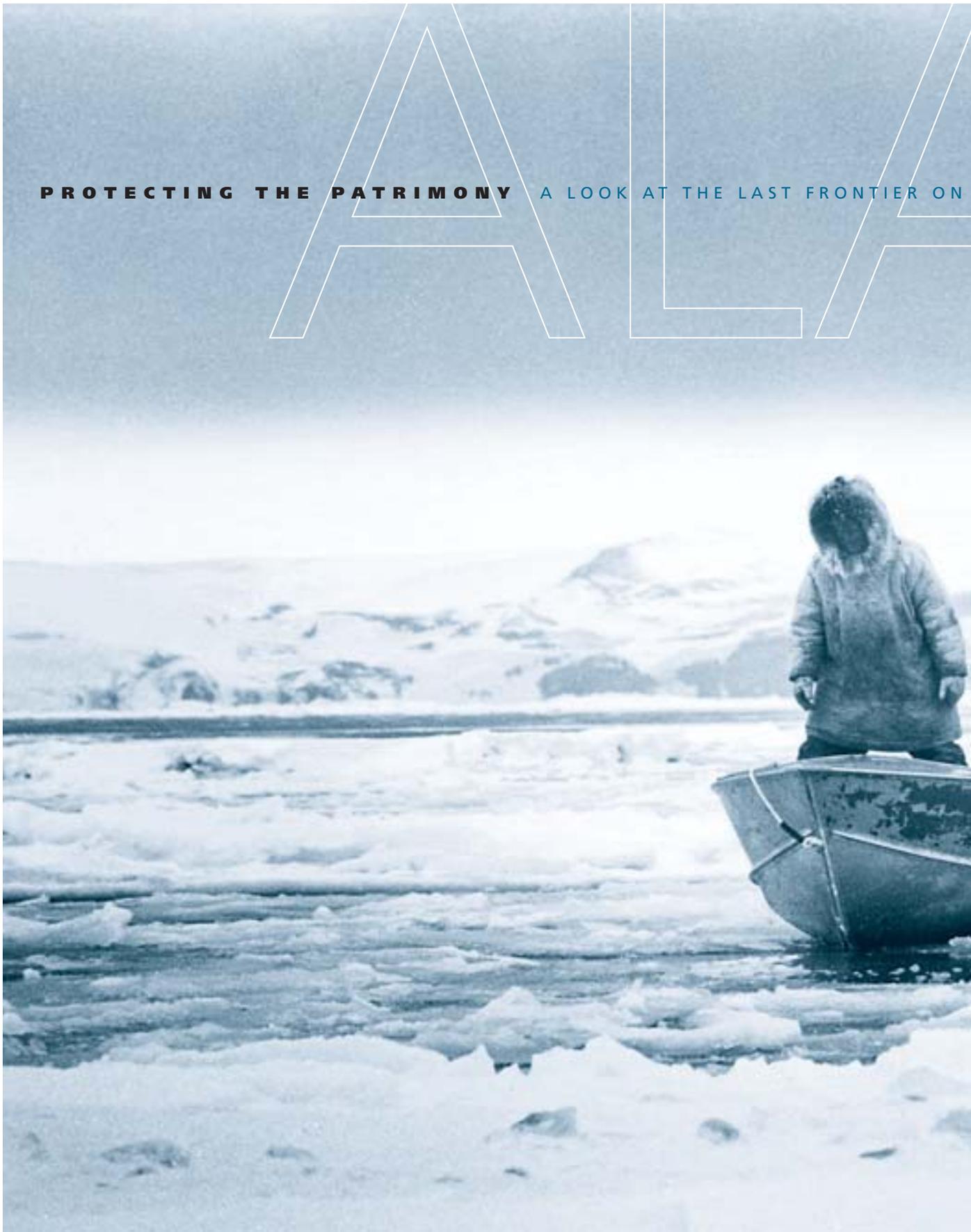
what the Park Service has done for this community is bring everybody to the table. Growing up here, I did the requisite fourth grade visit and I don't remember ever really feeling a sense of how big the whaling story was."

About the future education center, she says, "That's going to be the place where we tell kids that Frederick Douglass came to New Bedford. That's going to be the place where we read the first ten chapters of *Moby Dick*. We can tell them, 'You know the first ten

ABOVE: LOOKING DOWN ON THE HEART OF THE PARK, THE SEA BEYOND. RIGHT: CITY HALL.



PROTECTING THE PATRIMONY A LOOK AT THE LAST FRONTIER ON

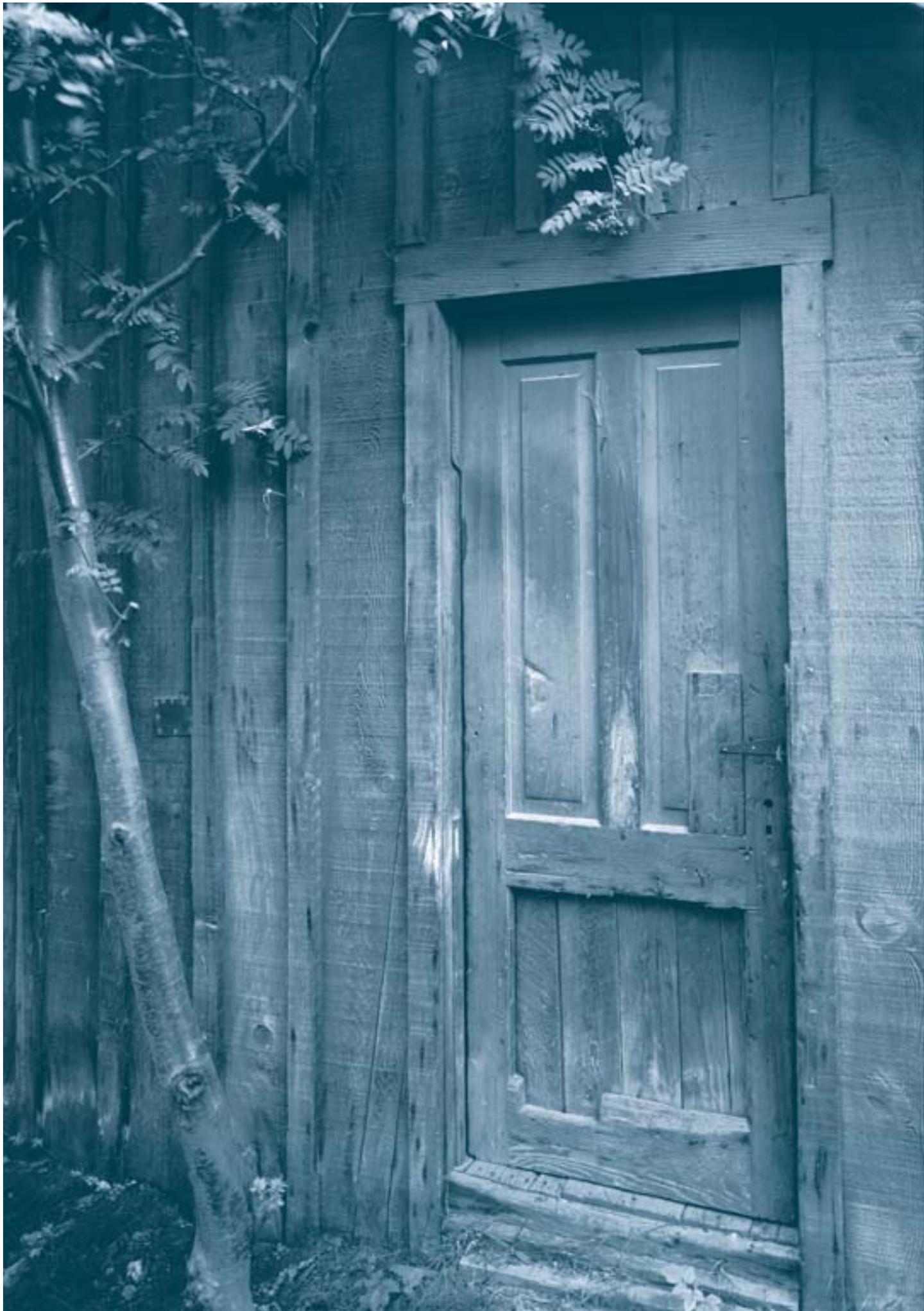


BELOW: SEAL HUNTERS NEGOTIATE ICE IN SEARCH OF OPEN WATER. © JAMES H. BARKER

ALASKA

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT





25_{years}

ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT

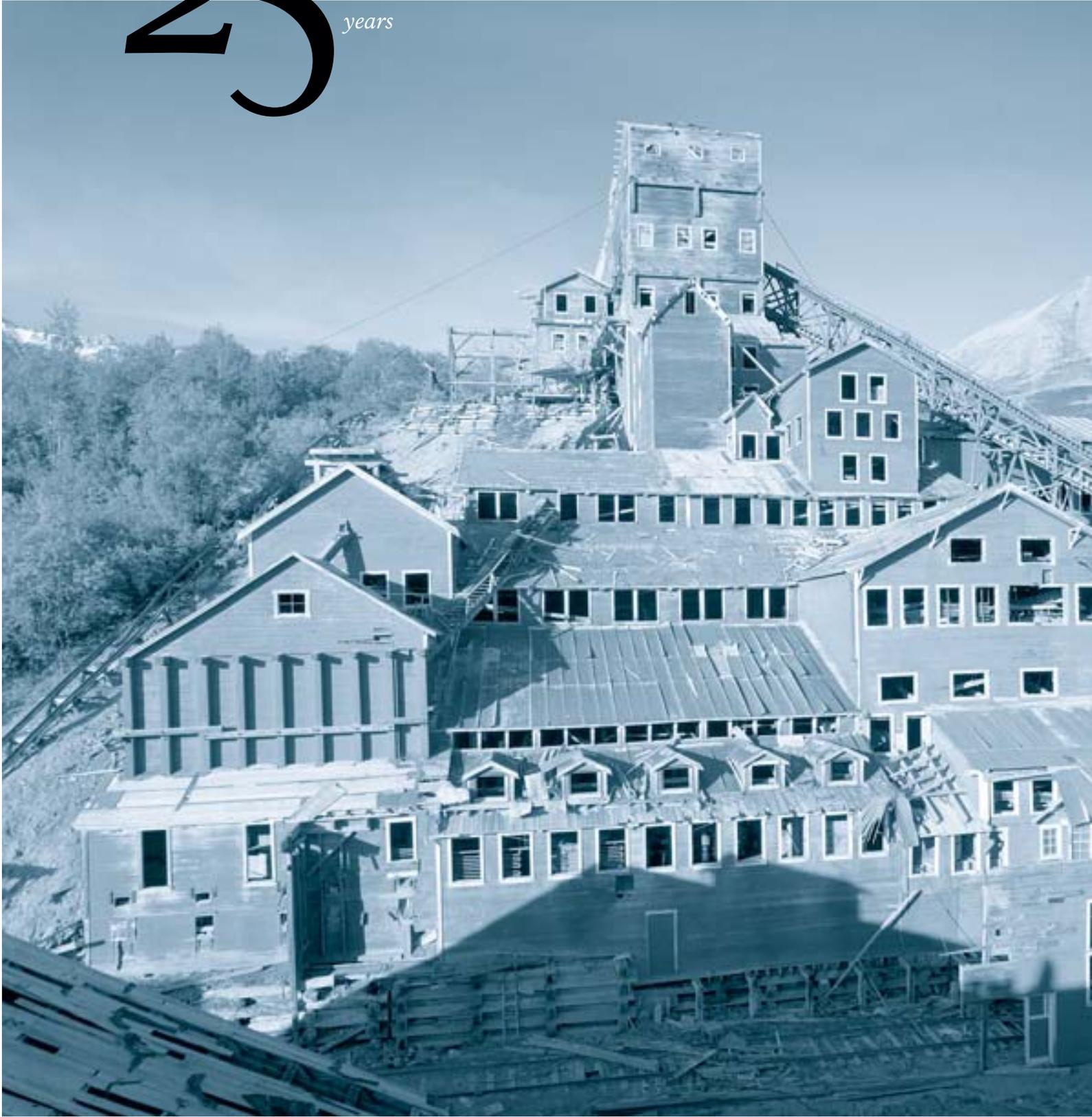
Alaska changed forever with the law that came to be in 1980, especially for native peoples. Ten national parks were established, and three old-line parks enlarged, doubling the size of the National Park System. The largest conservation act in American history engendered discontent, today less strident but not fully receded. “Having parks right in our back yard was very sudden,” says Herbert Anungazuk, a National Park Service cultural anthropologist and liaison with native communities. “People considered Alaska barren. Who would have thought that they would put parks in our traditional lands?” A former whaling captain, Anungazuk witnessed the new world wrought by the law. “If you use our traditional concept of boundaries, we had vast acreage, but now it was owned and regulated in new ways. The process was very, very complicated. I, for one, didn’t understand it. Most everybody else didn’t either.” ¶ It was a new world for the National Park Service, too, says archeologist Jeanne Schaaf. “When I began working here in 1984, the parks were still very new. And even though the Act was years in the making—with people very aware that humans were part of the newly protected ecosystems—it came as a surprise to many. To those who’d always lived here, the rules and designations were confusing, even threatening. I clearly remember an elder saying: ‘They have money to go buy [things] and we do not . . . we have to hunt to survive.’” ¶ Today Schaaf is struck by the change in attitude—and the success in implementing the Act in partnership with native peoples. “Now many see the land as ‘locked open’ not locked up,” she says, with traditional activities and resource use protected. “The work of the agency underscores the intimate human presence in what many perceive as wilderness,” she adds. “It’s a matter of working out the bumps in terms of individual ideas of what wilderness should be.” ¶ Taking the research to the public can be challenging. “There are no roads to many parks—visitors don’t necessarily come through a gateway,” says Schaaf. “So we’ve got to be creative about catching them. If a cruise ship is on the way, we’ll try to get someone on board to give talks.” Adds historical architect Steve Peterson, “In a sense, we’re only 25 years old. That mirrors the growth of the cruise ship industry. Some communities have four or five ships a day. That may be a blessing or a curse, but it certainly is a challenge.” Here, John Quinley—Alaska’s assistant regional director, communications, for the National Park Service—talks with his three cohorts about the challenges of the last quarter century, and the opportunities ahead.



LEFT, RIGHT: VIEWS OF SKAGWAY, A RESTORED FRONTIER TOWN IN KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

25 *years*

ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT





O: *Let's take a look at the big picture. Can we give readers an idea of the breadth of resources the Park Service is challenged to care for?*

PETERSON: They range from very remote yet very living resources to a wealth of historic structures and cultural landscapes—an emerging area of study in Alaska fostered by the 1980 law.

One of the most noticeable impacts came with the establishment of a Park Service central office. Prior to that, our presence was pretty much unknown, except for a few parks. We began to grow a full complement of expertise in history, museum work, archeology, anthropology, ethnography, and historic architecture. We also began to support the “external” side, in terms of, say, working with communities to nominate sites to the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic preservation in Alaska predates the law by only a few years. One early example is the restoration of the Bishop's House at Sitka National Historical Park, one of four buildings that remain from the Russian colonial era and now a national historic landmark. That park has a difficult balancing act—it interprets the 1804 Battle of Sitka, a major confrontation between colonial Russia and the region's Tlingit-Kiksadi people.

In the historic town of Skagway, which commemorates the Klondike gold rush of 1898, the Park Service acquired a number of buildings right on the main street, since beautifully restored. We assist private owners with preservation, too. Then we have a scattering of more humble resources—like the patrol cabins at Denali National Park established to protect against poaching in the 1920s, which are being refurbished.

On the cultural landscape side—unlike, say, the East, where there is a variety of designed landscapes—Alaska's resources typically are vernacular remains of frontier settlement or ethnographic landscapes that tell a story of how native peoples lived and subsisted. Understanding these places is difficult.

Our latest acquisition, in the heart of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, is the Kennecott Copper mining town. As an architect I'm embarrassed to say what an archeologist pointed out to me. Here you are surrounded by this 11-story mill, by the magnitude of development. There's just a hugeness when you're in and amongst it. But when you fly in, the country is so vast and Kennecott is only a freckle. You're between two scales. You're so impressed by the endeavor of man, yet man's work is so insignificant compared to the magnificence of the landscape.

The Park Service evaluated the site, acknowledged the significance, did a national historic landmark nomination, but decided not

LEFT: REMAINS OF KENNECOTT COPPER MINE, WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK.

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to acquire it due to lack of local support, among other factors. We did assist the owners, who were struggling to preserve the place. Over time, the locals became aware of the importance, realizing it would soon be lost. As a result, the community—initially very skeptical about a park, very skeptical about more land in federal ownership—came together with a strong grassroots advocacy to purchase the site, which the Park Service did in 1998.

We realized that the people of Kennecott are a vanishing legacy. We worked with the community, brought back the children of the mine managers, took down their oral histories, copied their photo collections at the local lodge, and published the results in a book called *Kennecott Kids*. Growing up in a mining town is a very different perspective than what you get of most mill operations. The “kids”—now in their 70s and 80s—were encouraged to bring pictures and scrapbooks, which inspired the design of the publication.

To document Kennecott, we worked with the Historic American Engineering Record and the University of Oregon School of Architecture. Right now the place is being stabilized and rehabilitated, an ongoing effort.

Q: *Let's talk about archeology.*

SCHAAF: There have been tremendous discoveries in all the parks, and all over Alaska. The Act enabled the Park Service and other agencies to spread research and documentation dollars across the state, which encouraged innovative, long-term research. We've dated sites in excess of 10,000 years in northwest Alaska, the Seward and Alaska Peninsulas, and the Brooks Range, whose Caribou Crossing Site offers extensive evidence of hunters intercepting their quarry in open valleys.

At the Bering Land Bridge, we've recorded a complex to drive the caribou as well as a host of fabulous stone monuments. It's a level of masonry—and concentration—not seen in any other hunter-gatherer society. On the Alaska Peninsula, we've excavated the remains of the earliest mariners, who stained their house floors entirely in red ochre. Thanks to the excavation of some well-

preserved sites in Aniakchak, we're beginning to understand the effects of catastrophic volcanic eruptions on people and ecosystems. The Kijik National Historic Landmark, in Lake Clark, protects the largest concentration of prehistoric Athabaskan settlements, with over 300 houses dating as early as 900 years ago.

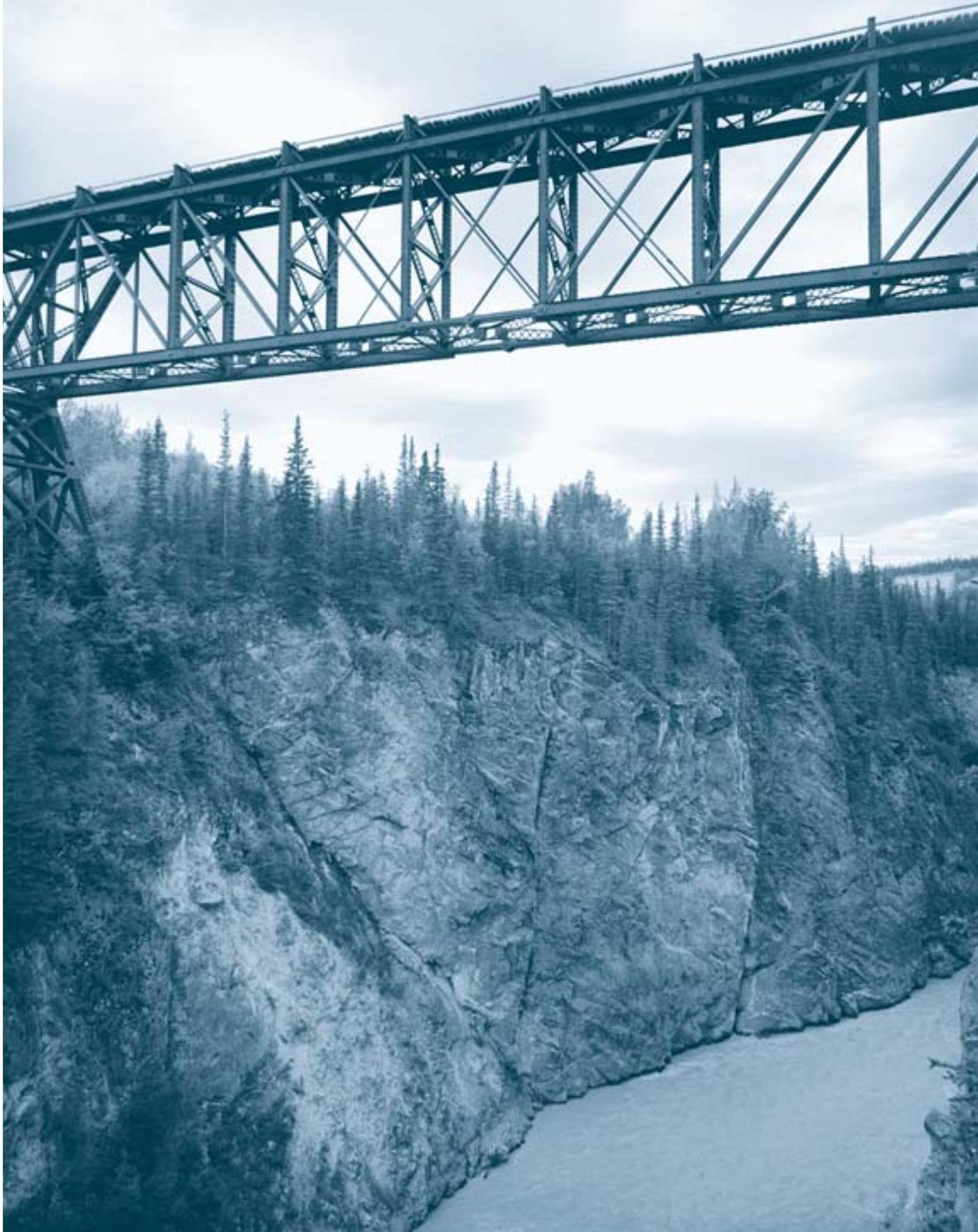
Other sites include rare rock paintings—the only two known in Alaska's parks—petroglyphs, ancient culturally modified trees, and burials. Preserving sites everywhere is a growing challenge due to increasing sea levels, storminess, and melt.

Q: *How would you explain the importance of this work to the taxpayers?*

SCHAAF: Well, Congress has said it's in the public's interest to preserve and understand the full gamut of human history. Prehistoric sites are not some foreign and distant curiosity—they're part of a shared identity. We've been hunter-gatherers longer than we've been industrialists.



ABOVE: THE MILLION DOLLAR BRIDGE—ONCE LINKED BY RAILROAD TO THE KENNECOTT MINE AT WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS—EXHIBITS THE MAGNITUDE OF RESOURCE EXTRACTION. **RIGHT:** A GHOST OF THE ECONOMIC MACHINE, THE KUSKALANA BRIDGE. THE SPANS ARE ONE OF MANY DOCUMENTED FOR THE HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.





25 *years*

ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT



LEFT: CHIEF SHAKES HOUSE, ONE OF A VANISHING BREED OF CLANHOUSES.

We need to remember that prehistoric sites are ancestral to all of us. Linguistic, cultural, and physical differences are very superficial and relatively recent in terms of human evolution. Archeological sites encompass the entire range of who we are, what we do, what we believe, and how we live.

Plus, archeological records are a treasure trove of climate data. Over the last 10,000 years, since the close of the last ice age, the planet's ecosystems have experienced dramatic change. How did they respond? How did the people respond? How did the landscape respond? This record is preserved largely in archeological sites.

Q: *With 21st century rules and regulations how have things changed in the traditional hunting and gathering areas?*

ANUNGAZUK: Native people didn't take outboard motors and rifles in hand quickly, but when they did the harvests increased without limit practically. Our only restriction was the weather. Today, as a result of the law, there are quotas, limits on the game.

In terms of land use beyond what was thought by researchers, these areas have existed for thousands of years in terms of place names. Maybe all you'll see is a little indentation in the earth indicating habitation before. Many times you'll see nothing more than a little pile of rocks.

Some of the names changed as the terrain changed. Maybe it was a little stream that you could jump across, now you can get a boat in it. The effort to document how people lived in the past is rather new. Previously, we shared information orally among ourselves. But then we had our legs chopped off—languages lost, new generations with new religions, mine included.

Initially, there was a flush of researchers. The elders, many now gone, shared freely. But when the results came out in print, they weren't mentioned. That really hurt the effort. In the last 10 years, this has changed. We don't just jump on a plane and fly into a community. We get with the traditional council. We explain why we want to come and when. Speaking the language is a plus, so I'm fortunate.

Q: *Jeanne, what's your experience?*

SCHAAF: At Glacier Bay, we did a series of archeological surveys, finding sites, then connecting them to oral history accounts about floods and forts and things like that. This grew into place names, researched with the village of Hoonah. Eventually, park staff took

the villagers to the sites, where they had potlatches and reconnected with a rich heritage.

It truly opened doors. The situation went from the Hoonah barely speaking to the park—not being able to gather eggs and do traditional things—to the wider realization by all of the landscape’s richness.

PETERSON: The story is two-edged. There was this perception of Glacier Bay as absolute wilderness, in the mythology of John Muir. But this sense denied the Hoonah their heritage.

Wayne Howell, who has spearheaded the project, started by simply developing an accurate place-name map. That began to show the broad reach of culture into the bay. He’s been doggedly sticking with it for years. You know, we’ve gotten away from people cycling in and out so much. They become a resource themselves—maybe they need a special designation! When you’re here a few years and gone, your success is limited. It takes time for people to put a face with what you’re doing.

Q: *There’s been a lot of work outside the parks.*

PETERSON: Perhaps more than in the lower 48, there’s a blurring between what we do in the parks and what we do outside. Plus, the Act requires us to help native communities with preservation when they ask for it. We’re very comfortable with both hats. As a result we’ve been very successful on all manner of projects.

One example is Chief Shakes House in Saxman, documented by our office using HABS standards. Clan houses were once found throughout southeast Alaska; now they’re vanishing, with probably no more than half a dozen—like this one—that survive from the early 20th century. These are humble places that are more about community than architecture.

World War II had a huge impact on Alaska. When the Japanese invaded the Aleutians, the U.S. Navy evacuated the native people, who were forcibly interred in southeast Alaska’s old canneries. They were given a matter of hours to pack a bag before they were taken away. Many died of tuberculosis. Their Russian Orthodox churches were burned or commandeered by the military, the icons ransacked.

The Aleuts received recompense as part of a 1988 bill that compensated Japanese Americans. The Park Service played a role in documenting the damage to six of the churches and their icons. We later assisted in the restoration of both. Three of the structures are now national historic landmarks.

The Aleutian Islands are a tremendous national resource, hidden in the fog from public perception, far removed from where everybody wants to go. Few people know that the Japanese invaded the United States here. The landscape doesn’t heal quickly, so the evidence is still there—the foxholes, the trenches, the bombing scars—though many of the structures are gone. In advance of a cleanup by the Corps of Engineers, we documented the place with the state preservation office and HAER.

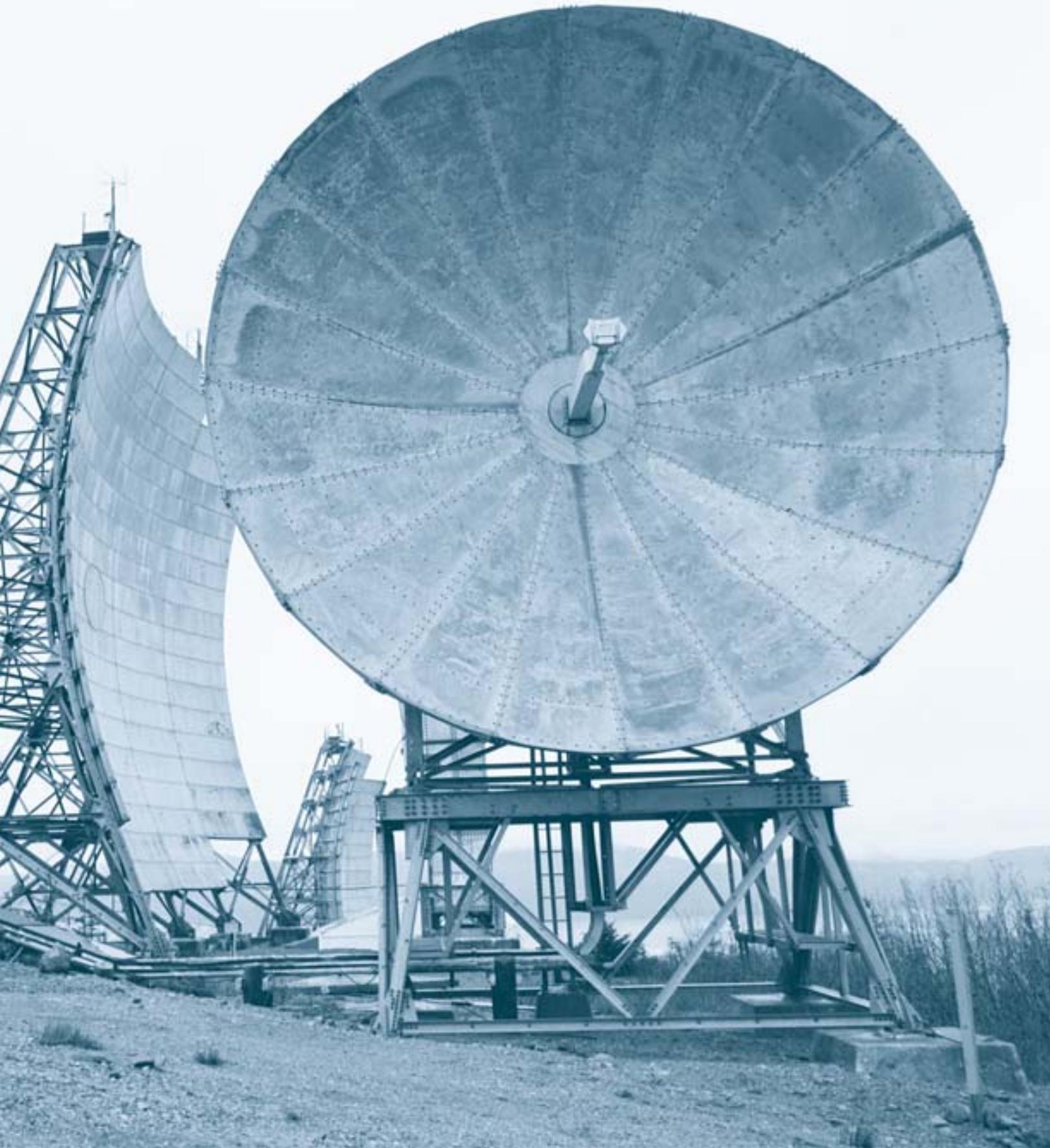


25 ALASKA NATIONAL
years



L I N T E R E S T L A N D S C O N S E R V A T I O N A C T

ABOVE: HISTORIC CHURCHES WERE DOCUMENTED ACROSS ALASKA.



ROB STAPLETON/NPS/HAER

25^{years}

ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT

Q: *What's ahead for the next 25 years?*

ANUNGAZUK: Our biggest challenge is finding people to work with. We've lost considerable numbers of elders to old age and illness. Some anthropologists think people born in the 1930s and '40s are too young to say much about the traditional culture. Not so. These elders have lived the traditional way of life in its fullest, before monumental changes were wrought upon all the indigenous people of the north. It is most unfortunate that, as all people, this generation faces advancing age.

SCHAAF: I'd like to see partnering with other agencies to draw interns from the local communities, creating a pool of potential employees. Language preservation is obviously a priority among native groups. With global warming we face the incredible loss of archeological remains to sea-level rise. High-altitude sites in snow and ice fields are melting out; well-preserved artifacts are going to be lost at a great rate.

PETERSON: The Park Service is holding its breath right now. Given the workforce demographics, we're about to see a large number of retirements and loss of knowledge. Visitation, if it continues to grow at even half the rate, is going to be tremendous—along with new ways to visit the parks. How do we provide a quality experience? How do we handle the impact? Will we have places like Brooks Camp where we have to barge in fuel and barge out garbage? The logistics of remote sites are tremendous, and not cheap.

Historic sites and structures don't heal themselves. Once rehabilitated, they start to deteriorate. How do you keep up the care? That was a big question mark 25 years ago and still is.

In many regards, we've probably fallen short of projections, and in many regards we've astounded ourselves. The climate when we started was not the most congenial—there was great anger over the taking of these lands. But in recent years we've seen much broader support than I ever envisioned. We've made tremendous strides contributing to Alaska and what Alaska is. I hope we can stay the course.

For more information, contact John Quinley, National Park Service, Assistant Regional Director, Communications, 240 West 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501, (907) 644-3512, fax (907) 644-3816, john_quinley@nps.gov. Contact Herbert Anungazuk at (907) 644-3458, herbert_anungazuk@nps.gov; Steve Peterson at (907) 644-3475, steve_peterson@nps.gov; Jeanne Shaaf at (907) 271-1383, jeanne_schaaf@nps.gov. Or write to them care of the address above.



LEFT: RADAR SITE NEAR CORDOVA. RIGHT ABOVE: THE REMAINS OF WORLD WAR II AT DUTCH HARBOR IN THE ALEUTIANS. BOTH PLACES WERE DOCUMENTED FOR THE HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD.



IT WAS THE TWILIGHT OF THE MYTHIC SOUTH, when machines were replacing field hands and African Americans were migrating out in great numbers, looking for new lives in cities like Chicago and Detroit. A domestic worker at the Melrose Plantation in Natchitoches, Louisiana, picked up some discarded paint and brushes she'd found and commenced depicting the life she'd known in bright primary colors. **CLEMENTINE HUNTER CAPTURED THE ESSENCE OF PLANTATION LIFE** in her scenes of baptisms, cotton-picking, pecan-harvesting, dances, weddings, and funerals. Until her 50s she had never so much as held a paint brush, but her vibrant scenes, with their fetching combination of fantasy and verisimilitude, captured the imagination of accomplished artists, who encouraged her to continue. **TODAY, HER PAINTINGS CAN BE SEEN AT THE SMITHSONIAN** in Washington and the Museum of American Folk Art in New York. But of all her work, the murals she painted at the Africa House, which is on the Melrose Plantation, are considered her best. Africa House was built in 1801 in the style of traditional huts of the Congo. It was used for storage and, at times, as a jail for slaves. Now it is a national historic landmark, and Melrose is part of Cane River Creole National Heritage Area, a network of sites managed in partnership with the National Park Service to commemorate 200 years of plantation life and Creole culture in the region. **IN EARLY 2005, THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR CREATION**, the murals were documented in large format photographs by the NPS Historic American Buildings Survey. Later, the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches, in partnership with the National Park Service, published *Clementine Hunter: The African House Murals*, an appreciation of the work and its creator. In an essay on the murals' cultural significance, de Teel Patterson Tiller writes, "what draws us to [her] work is pleasure, that hard to explain, hard to quantify . . . freshness and openness. We are privileged to look in upon a now vanished world." **FOR MORE INFORMATION**, visit www.natchitoches.net/melrose/ or go to the heritage area at www.nps.gov/cari.

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“The climate when we started was not the most congenial—there was great anger over the taking of these lands. But in recent years we’ve seen much broader support than I ever envisioned.” —Historical architect Steve Peterson, from “Protecting Alaska’s Patrimony,” page 28

